

LESSON



Choices

WORSHIP

We praise God together.

Power Text

"You are not your own; you were bought at a price. Therefore honor God with your body" (1 Corinthians 6:19, 20, NIV).

Key Texts and References

2 Samuel 11; 12:1-24; 1 Corinthians 6:15-20; Psalm 51; *Patriarchs and Prophets*, pp. 717-726; student story on page 124 of this guide.

Objectives

The students will:

Know that when they make right choices, they worship God.

Feel they are worshiping God with the choices they make.

Respond by choosing to worship God in their relationships with the opposite sex.

Power Point



We worship God when we follow His will about respectful relationships with the opposite sex.

Getting Ready to Teach

NOTE TO LEADER: Read through this lesson carefully and adapt as necessary for young juniors.

The Bible Lesson at a Glance

David worships God in the Temple, but forgets to worship God when he is away from it. His selfishness and sexual desire for Bathsheba overwhelm him. He plots to get rid of her husband so he can

marry her after he has already had sex with her. Not only has he abandoned his worship of his God, he gives in to his human nature because he isn't relying on God for strength. The result of this is pain and loss for many people. God, however, forgives him when he truly repents. David is still a man after God's own heart.

This is a lesson about worship.

God has given us clear guidelines

TWELVE

Program Notes			
Lesson Section	Minutes	Activities	Materials Needed
Welcome	Ongoing	Greet students at door Hear pleased/troubled	
1 Readiness	10-15	A. Flower Power B. Guarding My Heart C. What You See	Two identical fresh flowers Paper hearts, tape Magazine advertisements
* Prayer and Praise*	15-20	See page 120. *Prayer and Praise may be used at any time during the program.	
2 Bible Lesson	15-20	Introducing the Bible Story	Lemon, knife
		Experiencing the Story	Bibles, paper OR card stock, markers
		Exploring the Bible	Bibles
3 Applying the Lesson	10-15	Do You Love Me?	Bibles, photocopies (p.144), pencils
4 Sharing the Lesson	10-15	Commitment	Fresh flower for each student

showing us how to relate to the opposite sex. He knows that by following these we will be able to relate better to each other and to Him. We worship Him by following His guidelines.

Teacher Enrichment

"It was the spirit of self-confidence and self-exaltation that prepared the way for David's fall. Flattery and the subtle allurements of power and luxury were not without effect upon him. Intercourse with surrounding nations also exerted an influence for evil. According to the customs prevailing among Eastern rulers, crimes not to be tolerated in subjects were uncondemned in the king; the monarch was not under obligation to exercise the

same self-restraint as the subject. All this tended to lessen David's sense of the exceeding sinfulness of sin. And instead of relying in humility upon the power of Jehovah, he began to trust to his own wisdom and might. As soon as Satan can separate the soul from God, the only Source of strength, he will seek to arouse the unholy desires of man's carnal nature. The work of the enemy is not abrupt; it is not, at the outset, sudden and startling; it is a secret undermining of the strongholds of principle. It begins in apparently small things—the neglect to be true to God and to rely upon Him wholly, the disposition to follow the customs and practices of the world" (*Patriarchs and Prophets*, pp. 717, 718).

Teaching the Lesson

Welcome

Welcome students at the door and direct them to their table/small group leader. Have leader ask how their week has been—what they're pleased/troubled about. Then debrief student(s) on their Bible study activities last week. Say: **What was the most interesting part of the Bible story? What activity did you find the most helpful? Which activity was the most fun?** (The leader should know what the students' activities were for the past week so he/she can direct discussion.) Have students begin the readiness activity of your choice.

1

Readiness Activities

Select the activity or activities that are most appropriate for your situation.

A. Flower Power

You Need:

- two identical fresh flowers

Show two identical fresh flowers to the group. Keep one flower up front with you and pass the other to the students so each one can touch it, smell it, and even pull a petal or two from it. Have the students pass the flower until it looks a little bruised or crumpled. Then take the flower back from the students and hold it beside the fresh one. Ask: **Which flower would you rather have now? Why? How did the flowers compare to each other before we passed one around? How do they compare now?**

Ask: **How is what happened to this flower** (indicate the crumpled flower) **like what can happen to us** (to our sexuality)? **If we had cared for this flower, how would we have handled it?** Depending on your group, you may ask how the way the one flower was treated is like having sex with someone you're not married to. Sex wasn't meant to be part of just any relationship, and if people don't think carefully about what's really best (God's will) for themselves or their partners, they're abusing their relationships.

Debriefing

Say: **When people are respected, they are treated with care. When people are mistreated, that is called abuse. When our relationships are outside of God's will, they are abusive.**



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(Adapted from *Smart Choices for PreTeen Kids* [Loveland, Colo.: Group Publishing, 1998], p. 78.)

B. Guarding My Heart

Tape a paper heart to the back of each student. When you give the signal, have the students try to take the heart off each other's backs without allowing their own heart to be stolen. After a few minutes, call time and see if any-

one's heart remains intact. Congratulate students with their hearts undamaged.

Debriefing

Ask: What was fun about the game? How was trying to steal other people's "hearts" while protecting your own like "looking out for number one"? How did you feel when someone stole your "heart"?

Say: In this game you were looking out for what you thought was best for you even if it wasn't the best for someone else. God's guidelines for relationships between the sexes are best for both people.

You Need:

- paper hearts
- tape



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(Adapted from *Smart Choices for PreTeen Kids* [Loveland, Colo.: Group Publishing, 1998], p. 77.)

C. What You See

You Need:

- magazine advertisements

(Note: This activity is more suitable for teens. Choose one of the other readiness activities if you have mostly juniors in your group.)

Find pages of advertisements from magazines that use sexual images to sell a product (avoid anything too lurid or sensational). Show the things you have collected to the students.

Debriefing

Ask: What feelings are these advertisers trying to appeal to here? How do they work in getting people's attention? Why? As a society, are our guidelines for relationships similar to God's, or different? What problems can you see arising from people your age looking at these types of images all the time?

Say: The Bible has guidelines on the issue of sexuality. We can't always follow our own ideas and desires on this subject. Let's find and read Proverbs 4:12 and then our power text: 1 Corinthians 6:18, 20.



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Prayer and Praise



Fellowship

Report the students' joys and sorrows (pleased and troubled) as reported to you at the door (as appropriate). If they have given you permission, share one or two special items from students' Bible study during the week. Acknowledge any birthdays, special events, or achievements. Give a special, warm greeting to all visitors.

Suggested Songs

"When I Remember" (*He Is Our Song*, No. 58)

"O Lord, You're Beautiful" (*He Is Our Song*, No. 23)

"Take These Hands" (*He Is Our Song*, No. 127)

"Arms of Love" (*Praise Time*, No. 75)

Prayer

You Need:

- Bibles

Explain "Scripture Praying." That is, taking the words from the Bible and praying them as if they were your own. Use as an example David's prayer in Psalm 51:5. For example: "Dear Lord, I know I need a clean heart and a good spirit. Please clean my heart and give me your spirit. Amen."

Encourage the students to open their Bibles to this text and silently pray the verse into their prayer. Ask them to stay with bowed head until you say amen as an indication the prayer time is over.

Mission

Use *Adventist Mission for Youth and Adults* or another mission report available to you.

Offering

God wants everyone, everywhere, to know that His guidelines for relationships are the only ones that bring love, joy, and peace. By giving our offerings we can help spread the message about God and relationships based in His love.

*Prayer and Praise may be used at any time during the program.

2

Bible Lesson

Introducing the Bible Story

You Need:

- lemon
- knife

Show a lemon (or other sour fruit) to the class. Ask them to look carefully at it. Then take a knife and slice the lemon in half, exposing the juicy inside. Bring it close to the students. Ask them to smell it.

Ask: **Did you find things happening in your mouth when you saw this lemon cut?** (Usually the salivary glands will work.) Say: **Many temptations work this way. We look, then our bodies or emotions react (often involuntarily), and then we make a**

choice to run away from the temptation or to stay and eventually give in to it. The only way to avoid temptation is to make a decision before we are in the situation, and ask God for the power to carry that decision out. Today we are studying the story of a man who made a series of poor choices, not relying on God's guidelines and power.

Experiencing the Story

You Need:

- Bibles
- paper OR card stock
- markers

Divide the students into three groups. Ask each group to read the passage you give them and be responsible for a different portion of today's lesson. Ask them

to prepare to relate what their passage says to the rest of the group. They should plan to give their presentation with some creativity, not just verbally relating what they read. Some suggestions are included below.

Group one will be responsible for relating what David did. Their passage is 2 Samuel 11. They may want to prepare a flow chart of events, or of the cause-and-effect relationships that kept getting David deeper in trouble.

Group two will be responsible for relating God's counsel that David was ignoring. Their passages are 1 Corinthians 6:16-20 and Hebrews 13:4. They may want to create some type of chart or list.

Group three will be responsible for relating how God confronted David with what he had done, and how David responded. Their passage is 2 Samuel 12:1-24. They may want to present their portion as a skit, or mime with narration.

When all three groups have made

their presentations, proceed to Exploring the Bible.

Exploring the Bible

Say: **Our point for this lesson is that**

You Need:

- Bibles



We worship God when we follow His will about respectful relationships with the opposite sex.

The wonderful, good news is that God Himself is the One who gives us the power to follow His guidelines. Besides that, the even more wonderful news is that if, in the past, we have been like David and made bad decisions, He forgives us and cleanses us if we truly repent and ask Him to change us.

Let's find Psalm 51. Wait for all the students to find the psalm. **We are going to read this psalm together. It was written as David's plea for mercy, forgiveness, and cleansing. More than anything else, God wants our hearts to be right with Him.**

Read the psalm aloud together.

Debriefing

Say: **We worship God by following His plans for our relationships. But it is only through His power that we can do that satisfactorily. Through His grace He forgives us when we fall; He also empowers us, if we stay connected to Him, not to fall again. Why should we even try to follow God's way then?** Because when we don't follow God's way, He can forgive us, but He doesn't change the bad consequences of our actions.

3

Applying the Lesson

Do You Love Me?**You Need:**

- Bibles
- photocopies (p. 144)
- pencils

Give each student a copy of the "Do You Love Me?" worksheet from p.144. Have them work in small groups of three or four to complete their handouts.

When groups are finished, gather students together and ask:

Which of these couples treated each other as if they cared about each other? Explain.

Read aloud Hebrews 13:4 and ask the students to comment on its meaning. Then say: **Sex is one way to show**

love, and God has made it clear that it is an expression of love between married people. Boaz made it clear to Ruth that he cared about her without even touching her. Ask: What are some ways we can show our love to friends of the opposite sex without getting physical?



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Notes

4

Sharing the Lesson

Commitment**You Need:**

- fresh flower for each student

Say: **It's never too early to commit to keeping our future relationships with friends of the opposite sex pure.** Ask:

How do you think God wants you to handle these relationships?

Ask: **How can someone who has mishandled a relationship, become like that undamaged, fresh flower again** (reference to Readiness A)? **How**

do you think God would respond to that person?

Say: **Although God teaches that sex was created for married people, He also has the power to forgive people who've mishandled their relationships. God can and will give people a fresh start in love and in their relationships.**

Give each student a fresh flower.

(Adapted from *Smart Choices for PreTeen Kids* [Loveland, Colo.: Group Publishing, 1998], pp. 78, 79.)

Closing

Have the students pray silently for a moment, asking God to protect their sexuality in the future. Have them repeat Psalm 32:7, NIV, after you as a Scripture prayer benediction: **"You are my hiding place; you will protect me from trouble and surround me with songs of deliverance."**

STUDENT LESSON

Choices

Key Texts

2 Samuel 11;
12:1-24;
1 Corinthians
6:15-20; Psalm 51

Power Text

"You are not your own; you were bought at a price. Therefore honor God with your body"
(1 Corinthians 6:19, 20, NIV).

Power Point

We worship God when we follow His will about respectful relationships with the opposite sex.

Think of a time you have done something wrong and tried to find ways to hide the wrong? How did it work out? How would it have been better?

"Who is that beautiful woman?"

David asked his servant.

"Isn't she Bathsheba, wife of Uriah the Hittite?" his servant replied.

David had been walking on the roof of his palace in the coolness of the evening and the beauty of Bathsheba caught his eye.

"Bring her to my palace," David commanded his servant.

David was the most powerful man in all of Israel. He was the king of both Israel and Judah. In addition to this, David was strong, handsome, and very musical. But King David was married. And so was Bathsheba—each to another person. If David had taken time to talk with God, he would have been reminded that coveting someone else's wife would cause a lot of hurt to himself, Bathsheba, and many other innocent people.

Bathsheba was brought to see David. She spent time with him and then went home.

After awhile, Bathsheba sent David a message. "I'm pregnant." David read the message many times, hoping that it was a mistake; hoping that he had read it wrong. There was no escaping it. Bathsheba was pregnant and there was no possibility that Uriah was the father, because he was on the battlefield, fighting in David's army.

What should I do about this? David thought to himself. Once again, he should have turned to God, asked for forgiveness for his sin, and asked for guidance of his actions from here on. But no, he tried to fix it himself.

David sent word for Uriah to return

from the battlefield. Uriah went to the palace to see David. "Go home and relax," David encouraged Uriah. He hoped that Uriah would go home to his wife. But Uriah did not go to his home, he slept at the gate of the palace with Joab's servants instead.

When David asked him why he hadn't gone home, Uriah answered, "My commanding officers and all of the soldiers are camped out in tents in a field. Even God's ark is in a tent. It wouldn't be right for me to enjoy the luxuries of home and the company of my wife when our people are at war."

David's heart sank. Getting out of his mess might be harder than he thought. Uriah was faithful and dedicated to both God and his fellow soldiers. That made David look bad.

David tried even harder the next night. But David's plan still didn't work. He would have to come up with something else.

David decided that the only other solution to his problem would be to have Uriah killed in battle. He wrote a letter to Joab outlining exactly how to make it happen.

Joab did as he was commanded, and Uriah was killed in battle along with some of the other soldiers. Bathsheba wept for her husband and mourned for him when she heard he had died. After the appropriate time of mourning, David brought Bathsheba to the palace to be his wife.

David thought he had gotten himself out of the mess he had made. But God loved him too much to let him continue

down this path away from Himself. God sent the prophet Nathan to confront David with his sin. Nathan told David a parable that pointed out the grave sin David had committed.

David got the point. He hung his head in shame. "I have sinned against the Lord," he said.

"The Lord has forgiven you," Nathan told David, "but your son will die."

Even though David was forgiven, there was still no way to undo all the pain and loss that had taken place and would still take place in the future.

Soon after Nathan's visit, David and Bathsheba's son became very ill. David begged God to spare his life, but the child died. David understood, however; he stopped fasting and pleading with God. Some time later God blessed David and Bathsheba with another son—the very special Solomon.

Sabbath

- Do this week's activity on page 81.

Sunday

- Read "Choices."
- Write out your power text in large letters filling a sheet of paper.
- Repeat it several times to yourself. Then erase or cover up one word and say the verse again. Next cover another word and repeat the verse. Continue erasing words and saying the verse. You will be surprised how quickly you learn using this method.
- Ask God to lead you in the way that seems right to Him.

Monday

- Read 2 Samuel 11:1-5.
- Temptation surrounds us in many ways. In your journal write down three ways that you could be tempted to do the wrong thing. Also, add how you can avoid being in these tempting situations.
- Pray that you will be watchful of where small temptations are creeping into your life and that you will rely on God to help you resist them.

Tuesday

- Read 2 Samuel 11:6-13.
- Think about why David wanted Uriah to go home. Why didn't Uriah do as David had instructed? Who was the more responsible person here?
- In your Bible study journal, write about how two wrongs never make a right.

- Ask God to keep you pure in your relationships with the opposite sex.

Wednesday

- Read 2 Samuel 11:14-27.
- It is perfectly natural to be attracted to someone of the opposite sex. Make a list of four wholesome ways you can show this person you care for them.
- Write two things you are going to commit **not** to do until it is OK (for example, when you are married).
- Discuss your decision with an adult you trust.
- Ask God for His power to stay true to your commitment.

Thursday

- Read 2 Samuel 12:1-10.
- Draw the faces of David, Nathan, the rich man, the poor man, and the one sheep, showing from their expressions the way they felt.
- Thank God for stories that show the ugliness of sin and the power and forgiveness of God.

Friday

- Read 2 Samuel 12:11-31.
- Remember that David was a man after God's own heart in spite of his sins. Once he truly repented and asked God to clean him up, God gladly complied. If you have already made poor choices in your relationships with the opposite sex, know that God will forgive you, clean you up, and guide you into better choices in the future.
- Try to find a fresh flower to put in your room.
- Praise the Lord for His forgiveness, His grace, and His power. Claim them all as your own.